

A LITTLE BOOK
of
HOMESPUN
VERSE
—
MARGARET E. SANGSTER





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1911

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A LITTLE BOOK OF HOMESPUN VERSE



MARGARET E. SANGSTER

A LITTLE BOOK
OF
HOMESPUN VERSE

BY

MARGARET E. SANGSTER

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"LYRICS OF LOVE," "EASTER BELLS," ETC.



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THIS BOOK
IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED
TO
SALOME G. HOWELL
WITH WHOM I HAVE WALKED
IN HAPPY COMRADESHIP
SINCE THE DAYS OF THE MORNING-GLOW

The consent of Messrs. Harper and Brothers, of the *Christian Endeavor World*, *Sunday School Times*, *McClure's Magazine* and *Will Carleton's Everywhere* to the publication in this volume of poems which originally appeared in another form has been asked and obtained, and the author wishes to extend her thanks for the courtesy.

FOREWORD

In a certain farmhouse up country between the hall and the living-room I remember to have seen home-made curtains of silk, the work of winter evenings in a house where the mistress had little summer leisure. Bits of silk sewn together in a hit or miss fashion had been woven as they happened to come, into the curtains, and the result was fascinating to children of all ages from eight to eighty. Everybody who stepped within the hospitable doors of the pleasant home had a word of admiration for the silken curtains.

Once upon a time when sojourning in Florida I found myself a guest at an inn remote from traveled paths. Entering the little parlor, heated by an old-fashioned base burner, I came upon a group of nine women. They were absorbed in patch-work, and I was called upon to study the intricacies of coverlets also designed

Foreword

on the hit or miss pattern, for the comfort and adornment of simple homes.

We used, I fancy, to be satisfied with simpler things a while ago than it is our custom to be to-day. I am not counting upon the Gentle Reader's appreciation of my little book of verse, every bit homespun and purposely thrown together without special classification, except as I myself have a preference for random bits that may be picked up at any moment and laid aside at discretion.

The verses in this little book are meant for everyday folk who have an interest in everyday affairs. Love, honor, loyalty, faith and reverence belong to the staple of American life. In the days of my training we were proud to think of our country as inviting to its shores the discouraged, the needy, and, if you choose, the illiterate, from every quarter of the globe. We anticipated a day when the fusion and assimilation of cosmopolitan elements should make our country great and strong, and when the new nation on this side the Atlantic should stand in the van and lead the older nations on. This is still my gospel. I love the plain man, the plain woman; I love little children, and having never

Foreword

in my life been other than busy, I have tried from time to time to say something in verse for the heartening of those who toil.

My little home book is sent out with messages of cheer and comfort, to American homes, North and South, East and West, beneath our flag of stars. The Gentle Reader who cares for Nature, for home and hearth, and for the simple life will find in this book a personal message.

Margaret E. Sangster

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A LITTLE BOOK OF HOMESPUN VERSE

A LITTLE BOOK OF HOMESPUN VERSE

JUST A LITTLE MOTHER

She's just a little mother in a cabin 'far away,
Since I kissed her in the gloaming 'tis forever
and a day;
In my dreams I hear her calling o'er the weary,
weary sea,
Come ye back to Ballyshannon, Katy dear, come
back to me.

She is standing in the doorway filling up the
little space,
There's a kerchief o'er her bosom, there are
frills around her face,
She is smiling as Our Lady smiles above the
Holy Child,
And my heart runs forth to meet her o'er the
waste of waters wild.

Just a Little Mother

Do you know our Ballyshannon where the wandering winds are sweet
With the saltiness of the sea-foam and the tang of smouldering peat?
Do you know our mists that fold you in a blanket soft and grey?
Do you know our Ballyshannon in the red rose dawn of day?

Then you've seen the little mother, just Herself so small and old,
With a look I think would warm you were you shivering in the cold.
Oh, so patient and so tender 'mid the work that's never done,
Oh, so ready with her laughter from the rise to set of sun.

In the great house where I'm serving folk are ever kind to me,
But they do not know my yearning for the mother over sea;
Wage I earn and wage I send her, but I cannot longer bide,
I must seek my little mother, I must nestle at her side.

Just a Little Mother

She's just my little mother in the cabin far away,

Since I kissed her in the gloaming 'tis forever and a day.

In my dreams I hear her calling. "Mother, darling, yes, I'll come,"

I'll go back to Ballyshannon to my mother and my home.

THE MORNING MARCH

Morning after morning the tread of many feet,
Like an army marching wakes the quiet street.
With their sunny faces lighting up the way,
The merry-hearted little folk begin their busy
day.

Though little do they dream it, they live their
blithest time,

And who shall sing their gladness, in the meas-
ure of a rhyme—

With naught of care to cloud them, with easy
tasks to do,

And teachers full of gentleness to guide the
learners through

The mazes of the labyrinth, till all the grades
are past,

And the coveted diploma is in the hand at last?

Perhaps an honest lad who walks so sturdily
along,

May one day win the suffrages of many a
mighty throng.

The Morning March

The boy whose foot is planted now on learning's
lowest round

May scale the heights of science or its deepest
ocean sound.

The soldiers of the future, its splendid rank
and file,

Are hurrying forward here to-day where little
children smile;

Here, too, beneath the daintiness of dimpled
flower-like face

We catch the flitting sweetness of the mother's
look of grace,

Where yet Love's steady light shall burn above
a cradle bed,

And the tenderest heart be watching o'er a little
golden head.

Still day by day at nine o'clock I hear the army
pass,

Its footsteps ring along the stones, and bound
along the grass.

They seek the little district school upon the rural
road,

Whence yet may issue by and by men strong
to bear the load

The Morning March

Of this great nation, and to lead its councils in
debate;
The little district school that serves the altars
of the State.

The children of the foreign-born, they crowd the
city school,
Salute the flag, and day by day, are taught how
freemen rule.
From alien lands they come to us across the
billowy seas;
The stuff for good Americans is in them, if you
please.
They, too, when moulded into shape, shall be
our joy and pride,
Receiving gift and guerdon here, to other lands
denied.

Oft as the tocsin sounds its call, the lads and
lasses haste,
The schoolroom doors are open, and they have
no time to waste.
With look alert and earnest eyes, with expecta-
tion high,
There is no prettier sight to see, beneath the
bending sky.

The Morning March

God bless them as they go to school, God keep
them every one,
And guard them day by day until their child-
hood's work is done;
Then make them ready for the strife, and let
them take their place
Among the brave and steadfast who shall yet
redeem the race!

THE ROAD TO YESTERDAY

Who knows the road to yesterday,
The road so garlanded with flowers,
Who knows the place of careless play,
The sunny track of childhood's hours?
Oh, friend, I pray thee tell me where
I left that path, and strayed to this,
And lost the trail, and missed the turn,
And changed for gray, the way of bliss?

The haunting airs of yesterday
Are in my ear, like phantom tunes,
The perfumes sweet of yesterday
Waft here from its long vanished moons.
Oh, yesterday, dear yesterday,
Thy hoarded memories may awake
When I have reached that pleasant shore
Where living waters ever break.

In that to-morrow of God's love,
In that fair home where wait our lost,

The Road to Yesterday

I'll find my yesterday again,
The last deep wave forever crossed;
There, every pain and fear behind,
And only joy and peace before,
The lovely yesterdays I'll find
And keep, on the unfading shore.

THE MAGIC WORD

There was once a great Convention
Where the waves of argument
Rose and rolled in wrathful clamor,
Broke on reefs of fierce dissent;
Till at last with sullen faces
Men upon each other turned,
And the fires of scorn and hatred
Lit by passion, blazed and burned.

Then stood up a white-haired German,
Short of stature, rosy-red,
Only frost of kindly winters
On his venerable head.
Looking o'er the vast assembly
With a gaze of mild reproof,
For an instant evil impulse
Swayed, abashed and held aloof.

“What this meeting needs, my brothers,”
Said the sage with eye benign,

The Magic Word

And his steady aspect quelled men,
As by potency divine,
"Is a little word of magic
Spelled, I think, with letters three.
Nothing can be done without it:
Listen, friends! 'Tis L-U-V."

Rippled laughter o'er the benches,
Men shook hands, the old man beamed;
Surely Love was what was wanted,
Love from heaven that flowed and streamed.
Little matter how one spells it,
With three letters or with four;
'Tis the mighty power that binds us
Close and firm, from shore to shore.

Settling down to business, swiftly
The Convention did its work:
Smoothly passed from talk to action —
Moved without a jar or jerk.
Thus in many a household, friction
Smoothly might we move along,
If but Love would keep the tally,
And our heart-beats time a song.

INTERRUPTED

Into the midst of the music,
The joy and the fullness of life,
There swept a strange clangor; then silence,
A stillness more startling than strife.
We heard not the sound of the trumpets,
The bugles died out on the blast.
Could we march in that desolate waiting
For the thrill of a song that was past?

Could we work when our comrades no longer
Breathed courage and hope in the ear?
Could we triumph when sorrow and sighing
Had palsied our hearts, until fear
Swept over our souls like the shadow
Of some brooding evil to come?
Alas! we were stricken! the music
That had given us courage was dumb.

Then down from the beautiful heaven
A word came, the word of the Lord,

Interrupted

And it struck on our languor and trouble,
A dominant, silvery chord.
“ Stay not for the music,” it bade us ;
“ The music has only gone on.
You will hear it again in the glory
That waits when the day’s work is done.”

So now, though but faintly and seldom
We hear the sweet bugle call blow,
We march in the path that our Leader
Marked out in His conflict with woe.
Some day we shall hear the grand chorals,
Some day we shall stand on the shore
Where the comrades already are waiting —
The music has gone on before.

THE CHRIST-CHILD

The Christ-child unto the stable came
'Twixt the midnight and the morn,
His mother laid him softly down
By the beasts of hoof and horn.
The friendly kine a-near him stood
In the frost of the early day,
And, little brother of all the poor,
He slept on the fragrant hay.

The Christ-child slept in the stable dim,
And over him flamed the Star
That was golden-bright with the light of heaven
Where God and the angels are.
Then, journeying far, came king and priest,
With a wealth of spices sweet,
And, little brother of all the rich,
They knelt to kiss His feet.

In a mother's arms, the Christ-child lay,
When the winter storm was wild,

The Christ-Child

And into her happy brooding face
Her baby looked and smiled.
Of David's line, yet peasant born,
And Son of God most high;
The seraphs sang His praises
And the Star lit all the sky.

A gift of gifts that tender Child
Brought hither for you and me;
From the leaven of greed, the clutch of hate,
By Love to be ransomed free.
And once a year, in the long, long year,
For a whole and happy day,
To share again the heart of the Child
Wherever the children play.

O little brother of every man!
Obscure, or high, or great,
Thine is the alchemy of heaven
Wrought in our low estate.
We find Thee still in the stable dim,
But, for Thy cradle bed,
Oh, rest not in the manger stall,
Take Thou our hearts instead.

THE GOOD FIGHT

It is not mere resistance,
Nor keeping watch and ward,
Not doing sentry duty,
Pacing a velvet sward,
Nor safe behind the breastworks
Is it holding the foe at bay,
The fight with sin and Satan
It is ours to wage to-day.

We must often strive in the open ;
We must kneel on the firing line ;
We must follow the flag undaunted
Where the enemy's colors shine ;
In the utmost stress of peril,
In the midst of pain and loss,
We must fight to the death, if need be,
For the banner of the Cross.

Brave souls have gone before us,
The valiant and the true ;

The Good Fight

In the field where the Captain led them
They were strong to dare and do.
Shame on the craven-hearted
Who steal from the fight away,
When the Lord of hosts is setting
His battle in array.

We meet the powers of evil;
They darken earth and air;
But the shield of faith is ours,
And the might that comes by prayer.
For the Lord of angels leads us;
The Right shall smite the Wrong,
And up the steeps of glory
We shall carry the victor's song.

It is not mere resistance,
Though oft we can only stand,
When well-nigh spent and fainting
Are the weary heart and hand;
But it's fighting in the open,
It's bearing the battle's brunt,
It's facing the foe undaunted,
It's the wrestle at the front.

BE STRONG

Whatever may happen, whatever may come,
Whether things go right, whether things go
wrong,
There is one plain duty ; abroad, at home,
It is told in the order, be brave, be strong.
The fellow who falters and loses heart,
The fellow who fears in the thick of the fight,
And he who quails in the coward's part,
Has never heard this order aright.

Be strong to suffer, be strong to dare,
Be strong to speak, let your words ring true ;
Be strong the burdens of life to bear,
Be strong to wait, and be strong to do.
And whether around you be silence spread,
And whether near you be shout and song,
In the core of your soul let these words be said,
In the combat of living be brave, be strong.

FROM NAZARETH

Comes any good from Nazareth?
The scornful challenge as of old
Is flung on many a jeering breath,
From cloistered cells and marts of gold.

Comes any good from Nazareth?
Behold, the mighty Nazarene,
The Lord of life, the Lord of death,
Through warring ages walks serene.

One touch upon his garment's fringe
Still heals the hurt of bitter years.
Before him yet the demons cringe,
He gives the wine of joy for tears.

O city of the Carpenter,
Upon the hill slope old and gray,
The world amid its pain and stir
Turns yearning eyes on Thee to-day.

From Nazareth

For He who dwelt in Nazareth,
And wrought with toil of hand and brain,
Alone gives victory to faith
Until the day He come again.

THE CHILD IN THE MIDST

When the Lord of the great and the little,
The potter whose hand shapes our clay,
Sets a child in the midst of the market
Where the world-peoples chaffer all day,
Sets a child with its innocent questions,
Its flower-face dimpled and fine,
In the very heart's core of the clamor,
A thought of the Maker Divine ; —

And men, in their lust for dominion,
Their madness for silver and gold,
Crush the beauty and charm of that spirit,
Make the flower-face withered and old,
Bind the hands and the feet with a tether
That childhood can never untie,
Deem not that Jehovah unheeding
Looks down from the heights of the sky.

He sees, though we think Him unseeing,
He knows when the factory wheels

The Child in the Midst

Grind down to the life-blood of children ;
When the poor little bond-servant kneels
In the pang of its frightful abasement ; —
Though all men are deaf to its prayer,
There is coming a dark day of judgment,
And the Lord of the child will be there.

The child in the midst, as we've marred it,
Bent-shouldered, dull-eyed, and a slave,
That cringes at word and at fetter,
That cries for the rest of the grave ;
With our free flag unfolding above it,
So free, from the pine to the palm !
And our scared pallid children beneath it !
There's a jar in the lilt of our psalm.

From the mine where the midnight engulfs it,
From the mill where the clogged air is thick
With the dust of the weaving that chokes it ;
From the home where it's fevered and sick
With man's toil, when God meant it for glad-
ness,
The child in the midst in our clay
God-molded, man-marred calls to heaven
For the vengeance we're daring this day.

BARBARA

Our pretty maiden Barbara
Came tripping down the street:
It seemed as if a chime of bells
Were in her little feet.
So light her footfalls, and so gay
Her smiles on old and young,
A kindly word for Barbara
There was on every tongue.

This maid is Barbara the Third:
And Barbara the First
Sits dreaming in her easy chair,
By tender kindred nursed.
Her hair is whiter than the drifts
Of newly-fallen snow:
For Barbara for ninety years
Has tarried here below.

And age and youth, though far apart,
In one sweet home are set,

Barbara

And round them both are ministries,
That wear an amulet.
The charm of love encompasses
Both Barbaras, to-day:
The one with life before her set —
The other worn and gray.

When pretty maiden Barbara
Shall reach her ninetieth year,
May she look back on well-spent days,
And on, without a fear!
For Heaven, one day, shall conquer
And youth shall guerdon age,
What time life's kindest angel ends
The laggard pilgrimage.

ELIZABETH

The little maid, Elizabeth,
Held out her royal hand to me;
Though she is only three years old,
A very princess royal she.
One begs this lady for a kiss,
One bows to her a vassal's knee,
Since she is princess of the realm,
Although her birthdays number three.

Tall brothers do her bidding, fain
To please the witching tiny elf;
Her father for her pleasure still
Forgets the homage due himself,
And ruler of our little world,
Obedient to her lightest breath,
By right divine of baby charm
Is this small maid, Elizabeth.

PUSSY WILLOW

Almost before the snow has gone
While yet the clouds are chilly,
Before the crocus blooms again
Or spring awakes the lily;
A gentle herald meets our eyes,
Her barque has crossed the billow,
And here, with touch of glad surprise,
We hail the pussy willow.

A pleasant harbinger of love,
She dares the bandit bluster
Of winds that hurry here and there
At March's furious muster.
Full soon we'll hear the blue-bird's note,
Full soon in sunny weather,
Shall sweet, delicious perfumes float;
We'll all be blithe together.

The pussy willow leads the band,
A merry throng come after,

Pussy Willow

With song and wing and dear delight,
With childhood's merry laughter.
The earth that late was fast asleep
Has turned upon her pillow.
The joy of those who sow and reap
Thrills in the pussy willow.

THE FORERUNNER

When the first little flower peeps up from the ground,

And opens its eyes to the face of the sky,
Though never a bugle may cheerily sound,
An army with banners is hastening nigh.

Ere long shall the dear things we loved long ago,

Make regal the fields that so lately were bare ;
The lilies will gleam, and the roses will glow,
And fragrance shall waft through the sun-filtered air.

The first tiny flower is pledge of the rest,

The daring forerunner of flowers to be.

When the spring and the summer shall lavish their best,

And beauty flood in like the waves of the sea.

The Forerunner

Did it seem in the day when the winter was chill,
And the land lay asleep 'neath its cover of
white,
That life had forgotten its glory and thrill,
And shadow had fallen, and darkness and
blight?

Ah, heart that was faithless, be thankful to-day,
Forever the promise of God standeth sure.
Believe that the spring-time is coming this way,
To fill up the measure of things that endure.

When the first little flower peeps up from the
ground,
And opens its eyes to the face of the sky,
Though never a bugle may cheerily sound,
An army with banners is hastening nigh.

OTHER MAYS

With shimmer of dancing waters,
With rustle of rippling leaves,
With seed in the furrow sleeping
That shall later be bound in sheaves,
Comes May in her 'broidered raiment,
Comes May with her exquisite days ;
Yet all that my heart can think of
Is the glory of other Mays.

Here are the tinted blossoms,
Here is the song of the bird,
And nest and wing and fluting
By the same sweet impulse stirred.
The notes of love and longing
And the vesper song of praise —
In my inmost heart they are waking
An echo of other Mays.

Lover and lass are straying
Beneath the fragrant boughs ;

Other Mays

The south wind's tender swaying
Keeps time to their murmured vows.
So, some whose heads are whitened
By the snow of the wintry days
Went blithely on, troth-plighted,
In the light of other Mays

Life brings us the changeful seasons,
To each in his turn on earth:
And now it is summer's fullness,
And then it is winter's dearth.
To youth the fond rejoicing
And the flower-besprinkled ways,
And never a thought of yearning
For the grace of other Mays.

THE COMING OF SPRING

Blue of the sky that's above us, green of the
grass at our feet,
Breezes that kiss us in passing, just to be living
is sweet:
When spring has come back to the meadows,
and buds in the garden unfold,
And the thrall of the winter is broken, gone as
a tale that is told.

Birds in the tree-tops are singing, birds are at
home in the eaves,
The thrill of the life that is waking stirs under
the whispering leaves.
Not a brook but is merry to madness, not a river
but sings of the sea,
And old hearts grow younger in May-time, and
prisoners long to be free.

Ah! how we remember the May days, when first
we looked up to the sky,

The Coming of Spring

And watched our dream boats as they floated
far over those spaces on high:
Ah! how we remember the dear ones who heard
in the morning of May,
The call to a service beyond us, who slipped
from our clasping away!

They answered the roll-call of heaven, ere earth
to their eyes had grown dim;
The Master had need of their presence in the
place that was nearest to Him,
And oft as the May-time returning is here with
its music and light,
We listen again to their voices far-borne from
a crystalline height.

The children are glad in the May-time, the baby
laughs out in her glee;
We weary of counting the blossoms as white as
the foam of the sea.
Wherever we turn there is beauty: wherever we
look there is love:
And green is the grass in the May-time, and
blue is the heaven above.

The Coming of Spring

Pilgrim whose faith has been halting, O heart
overburdened with fears,
God sendeth thee strength in thy weakness, a
rainbow to shine through thy tears ;
Each May-time that comes is a token, a gift from
the Father Divine,
Who holds the round earth in His Keeping, who
guards it in shadow and shine.

TIGER LILIES

Children of sun and summer,
Encamped by the highway side,
There are never blooms more regal
In their air of winsome pride.
Color of flame and splendor,
Charm of a wilding grace,
I hail your torch-like beauty
In many a lonely place.

The spotless vestal virgins
In the garden's stately aisle,
Uplift a gleaming chalice
And lure with a maiden's smile.
Lilies all white and golden,
No passion of earth they know.
Yet I prize your deep-toned glory
As I treasure their stainless snow.

For the gypsy lad may pluck you,
And the heart of the tired tramp

Tiger Lilies

Beat once again as in childhood
By the light of your kindling lamp.
You are flower of the common people,
My lily of road and dell,
And the fragrant winds that kiss you
Have the sound of a bridal bell.

God cares for the common flowers
That no man plants or tills.
They laugh by the million, countless,
On the everlasting hills.
God keeps on high their tally,
Children of sun and shower,
And they waken each blithe summer
Part of its heavenly dower.

OLD FATHER WINTER

Old Father Winter is here again,
Hale and hearty and full of glee;
He is bringing the ancient blustering train
That do his bidding on land and sea.
Gales that roar from the frozen north,
Sleet that cuts like the sting of a lash,
Fleece that flies from the four winds forth,
Storms that over the forest crash.

Burly old winter with bells achime!
With the skater's glide o'er the frozen lake,
With glimmer of sun on the crystal rime,
And draughts of tonic that all partake;
We welcome you back for your lusty breath,
For your face of health and your right good
cheer,
For the thought you give us of conquered death,
When the sap stirs deep in the drowsy year!

In the heart of the winter sleeps the spring:
You cradle the buds in icy mail.

Old Father Winter

Old Father of tempests, your wildest wing
Hath shelter for nurslings sweet and frail!
You gather us close round the blazing hearth,
And the evening glides to the tune of a song,
And the home is safe, and the tidal mirth
Flows rich and sweet where our households
throng.

Old Father Winter, you sometimes nod
And violets wake on a sunny slope;
Then the blue-bird fancies that spring's abroad,
And the saucy sparrows are full of hope.
But we love you best when your mood is brave
With sharp cold weather and thrill of war,
When the white foam breaks on the thunder-
wave
That dies at last on the steadfast shore.

MEMORIAL DAY

Breath of the spicy roses, breath of the lilies
sweet,
And the gleam of steel, the flutter of flags,
and the tramp of marching men;
Far and away the music that bugles and drums
repeat,
Till the curtain lifts from the face of the
past, and now is the same as then.

I am standing straight in the shadow of the
honeysuckle vine,
With Harry, my bold-eyed laddie, clutching
a fold of my gown,
And Milly, my darling baby — oh, never were
babes like mine —
Asleep on my strong young shoulder, not
heeding the stir of the town.

The town is in strange commotion ; the men are
marching away,

Memorial Day

All but the old and the crippled. We cover
our heart-sick pain
With smiles that are like May blossoms, braving
the desolate day,
Kissing our hands to the soldiers. Shall we
ever see them again?

Husbands and sons and brothers, lovers and
friends galore,
And they carry the sweet light with them.
They are gone ; there is nothing to do
But to comfort the wondering children, to lock
and bar the door,
And then to pray for one's darling in the gray
coat or the blue.

Yes, we poured our tears at the parting, with
nobody near to know.
For women are brave at need, dear ; they can
bear the thrust of a sword.
You would never dream they were wounded, so
steadfast their clear eyes glow ;
And the only moan they make, dear, is made
at the feet of the Lord.

Memorial Day

Many a spring and summer have flashed their
 looms of light

Over the narrow ridges where sleeping the sol-
 diers wait;

And whether they fell in the morning, or passed
 away in the night,

They shall lie till the great Archangel sound-
 eth the trump of fate.

The children do not remember — it was all be-
 fore their day —

The passionate love, the passionate hate, the
 sorrow, the hope, the pride,

We felt who were young and buoyant when our
 brave ones marched away:

It is little to these young people which of them
 lived or died.

But I carry my pot of lilies, and I bid them
 bloom for one

Who was life of my life and soul of my soul,
 whom I gave for his country's sake.

I bear myself with courage, as I will till my day
 is done;

For a heart may sing its anthems, though a
 heart, alas! may ache.

Memorial Day

Breath of the spice of the roses, breath of the
lilies sweet,

And the flutter of flags and pennons, the sound
of marching men,

A pulsing of jubilant music, and the drum's in-
sistent beat —

Why, I've only to shut my eyes, dear, and
now is the same as then.

And ever dear Mother Nature, from the seed-
time to the sheaf,

Cares for the dead who are silent, and cares
for the living, too ;

She weaves her decorations in the snow-fleece and
the leaf,

Nature the ever faithful, though the skies are
gray or blue.

CHRISTMAS GIFT

“ Christmas gift, Missie? ” I hear them yet.
How the roses were blooming on Christmas
Day,
And the waves dashed up with the foam and fret,
On the shingle, like waves on a summer’s day.
The dear black people who thronged me ’round,
Lil’ pickaninny and Mammy Jean,
And Uncle Jacob, with bow profound,
And tall Aunt Hannah, as proud as a queen.

“ Christmas gift, Missie? ” with hands out-
stretched
And eager eyes, and their looks of love,
And the presents forth from the great house
fetched,
While the sun laughed down through the
cypress grove ;
Lil’ pickaninny and Mammy Jean,
And Missie, a child among them all.
And Oh ! but the Christmas was glad, I ween,
With its gift of love to one and all.

Christmas Gift

Gone are the days, and the roses are dead.

There's a trail of trade where the big house
stood.

The old sweet friendship for aye hath fled,

Like Mammy Jean and her dusky brood.

Lil' pickaninny and nut-brown queen,

You throng no longer your Missie's door,
It would make her young if the holly green

Could echo your "Christmas gift" once
more.

“ SEEMS LAK ”

“ Seems lak,” says Mammy Nell,
“ Some folks is lazy bawn:
Dey nebber weed de gahden,
An’ dey nebber hoe de cawn.
Yet ebbery puhson wait on dem —
Dey eats wid golden spoon,
Dey sleeps all houahs ob de day —
When I gets up right soon.

“ I wonder ef byme bye, my chile,
They will not hab their turn,
An’ wait on you an’ wait on me,
An’ what dey eat dey’ll earn?
If heaven’ll even things, my chile,
Dese lazy folks up dere
Will fine St. Peter settin’ ‘em
To sweep de golden stair.”

So muses gentle Mammy Nell,
Her black face shining bright;

“Seems Lak”

For she expects in heaven to have
A face all lily-white.

“Seems lak” her faith may win reward —
Our dear old Mammy Nell —
Whose simple life has been so hard,
Whose tasks are done so well.

AMY

Still do I see thee with thy sun-lit hair
With eyes as blue as violets in the spring.

In dreams thou comest to me blithe and fair.

What time the summer leaves are whispering
Faint undertones beneath the thrushes note,

'Twas then that thou didst hear the angel's
call

That from a land not far did hither float,

And very sweet and clear on thee did fall.

Vacant the place where thou wert wont to be,

The homely duties, how they miss thee yet!

How strange the household, ever lacking thee,

And who that loved thee could thy love for-
get?

I think of thee, so vivid and so bright,

I know thee living where beyond our ken

His servants serve Him, standing in His sight,

Or, faring forth for aid of toiling men.

Amy

By some low bed of pain I see thee still
Where childish face is haply fever-flushed,
Harsh tempers yield before thy gentle will
And angry tones are in thy presence hushed.
Thou art not far away though years have fled
Since last we saw thee, since we said good-by,
No thought of mine can count thee with the
dead;
So art thou living, and so art thou nigh.

THE MOTHER'S HYMN

WRITTEN FOR TENTH ANNIVERSARY, NATIONAL
CONGRESS OF MOTHERS.

Of old they brought their babes to Thee,
Our earthly ways who trod,
And veiled in our humanity
The mighty love of God.
The mothers held their little ones
So very close and near,
Thy look was brighter than the suns,
And yet they felt no fear.

Thy blessing, gentle as the dew,
Fell on each little lead.
And heaven itself came floating through
The words the Master said.
We, mothers of a younger day
And of another time,
Are fain to seek Thee in the way;
To Thee, our prayers would climb.

The Mother's Hymn

We seek Thy blessing on our own
Sweet lambkins of the fold;
We bring our children to the throne
In aspiration bold.
Receive us, Lord, as if indeed
We touched Thy garment's hem.
Accept our little ones, we plead,
Be all in all to them.

O Christ, Who walked beside the sea,
To Whom the children clung,
Let mothers' praise ascend to Thee
In every land and tongue.
And for this land divinely blest
One blessing more we crave;
Accept the offering of our best
And all our children save.

STRAIGHTWAY

“ What madness this? ” cried the fisher folk
By the Lake of Galilee,
When sudden and clear in their ears it broke,
A young man’s “ Follow me! ”
Straightway and swift as a homing bird
Flies up to the waiting nest,
They answered the call whose hearts were stirred
By a vision of Love’s own best.

They left the nets they would need no more
In the old familiar toil,
They turned away from the friendly shore,
As men enriched by spoil.
For grave and sweet was their Leader’s face,
And His eyes were full of cheer;
They would march at His bidding with resolute
pace,
And challenge the menace of fear.

Straightway

You who are young in the world to-day,
Have you heard that ringing call?
Are you ready to heed? Will you walk the way
Of the Lord who needs us all?
It is sounding down from the heights above;
It is Christ's word, "Follow me!"
Ah, straightway answer the mighty Love,
His servants and soldiers be.

THE LITTLE PRAYER

Among the prayers that all day long
 Made clamor at the throne
Was one that lost itself in song,
 Meant for the Lord alone.
Its sweetness reached Him clear and strong,
 As swift as sigh or moan.

A heart with joy that overbrimmed
 Sent forth the little prayer.
Its notes an angel might have hymned
 In heaven's serenest air.
No tear its brightness had bedimmed;
 It bore no weight of care.

“ Dear Christ, I am so blithe,” it said,
 “ I am so glad and gay,
I cannot walk with drooping head
 Upon the radiant way.
But fain I am with Thee to tread
 Each hour and every day.

The Little Prayer

“ And I would bring some joy to Thee,
There sitting on Thy throne ;
Oh, let my very gladness be
A service all Thine own.”
The little prayer went pleadingly
In softest undertone.

And Christ, Who listened, smiled to hear
The tender little prayer
That had no thought of grief or fear,
Nor any weight of care.
The little prayer drew very near
His heart, and lingered there.

THE GUEST AT THE DOOR

Thy home may be the lowliest
On thronged or lonely way,
Yet unto thee may come a guest
Whom circling worlds obey.

If thou but heed His gentle knock
And swift unbar the door,
The fragrance of the yielding lock
Shall bless thee evermore.

He steps across the threshold dim,
He sits beside thy board;
The light of stars comes in with Him,
Thy guest is Christ the Lord.

Henceforward every loaf of thine
And every brimming cup,
Shall be to thee a feast Divine.
Since thou with Christ didst sup.

The Guest at the Door

Thenceforward in thy heart shall be
A sense of sin forgiven,
The Christ Himself shall dwell with thee,
And earth be sweet with heaven.

“ASHAMED OF THE WORKING MAN? ”

His hand is grimy and callous,
His brow is bronzed with tan,
But only the weak and foolish
Are ashamed of the working man.
What boots his toil-bent shoulder,
That has bowed to a burden great?
At need it is strong to carry
The heaviest load of the state.

Ashamed of the honest fellow
Who kisses his bairnies at morn,
And is off for a day of labor,
That the idle flout with scorn?
In the sight of the watching angels
Who toil by night and day,
The man who does his duty
In a faithful, humble way,
Takes rank with the loftiest rulers,
And in the Creator’s plan
There are none more worth the crowning
Than the simple working man.

CHILDREN'S GAMES

Year by year the children play
The games of children yesterday.
The shouts we hear around the home
Were once reverberant in Rome.
And ancient Greece and Babylon
Saw children's games and children's fun
Like those that fill our sparkling air
With effervescence everywhere.

The tops they spin, the balls they toss,
The marbles with their gain and loss,
The skipping rope, the rolling hoop,
In eager pace or flying loop,
The kites that soar to touch the sky,
The dolls in dimpled forms that lie,
All these the generation through
Have pleased the race since it was new.

Still London Bridge is falling down
In many a Yankee street and town;

Children's Games

Still kissing goes by favor, when
The little maids and little men,
With blush and bow and look demure,
In childhood's morning, sweet and pure,
Play, just as other children played
Soon after this old world was made.

And if they learn to play the game
Right fairly, it is all the same,
Though some be born to golden spoon
And some have scarcely wooden shoon.
Time moves with swift and steady march,
And underneath the sky's great arch
The children of the moment play
In every age, the selfsame way.

THE WHITE CARNATION

Here's to the white carnation,
 Sturdy and spicy and sweet,
Wafting a breath of perfume
 On the stony way of the street;
Bringing a thought of gladness
 Wherever the breezes blow;
Here's to the white carnation,
 Pure as the virgin snow.

This is the flower for Mother,
 Wear it on Mother's Day;
Flower for rain and sunshine,
 Winsome, gallant and gay;
Wear it in Mother's honor
 Pinned to the coat's lapel;
Wear it in belt and corsage,
 For her who has loved you well.

The Mother in lowly cabin,
 The Mother in palace hall,

The White Carnation

Is ever the best and dearest,
The one we love best of all.
In travail and pain she bore us,
In laughter and love she nursed,
And who that would shame the Mother
Is of all mankind accursed.

Tired and wan too often,
Weary and weak at times,
But always full of the courage
That thrills when the future chimes:
Mother with hands toil-hardened,
Mother in pearls and lace,
The light of heavenly beauty
Shines in your tender face.

So here's to the white carnation,
Wear it on Mother's Day;
Flower that blooms for Mother,
Winsome, gallant and gay.
Flower of a perfect sweetness,
Flower for hut and hall,
Here's to the white carnation
And to Mother — Our Best of All.

AN EASTER HYMN

To Thee, dear Lord of death and life,
We lift our joyful song to-day.
Victorious in the utmost strife,
Thou art Thyself our strength and stay.

We bless Thee for the comfort sweet
That comes with every thought of Thee.
Our praises cling around Thy feet
Where yet the cruel nail-prints be.

For us were borne the shame and loss,
For us the scourge, the jeer, the thorn;
For us the darkness of the cross,
For us awakes the Easter morn.

We stand beside the open tomb,
The stone we dreaded, rolled away.
Once more for us the lilies bloom
Upon the Resurrection Day.

An Easter Hymn

O Lord of life and Lord of death,
We worship Thee this Easter Day.
All love, all faith, all hope, all breath,
We bring to praise Thy conquering way.

With Mary we would hear Thy voice
Amid the garden's cloistered calm;
With her our hearts would fain rejoice,
Thy love for every wound a balm.

O King of kings, and Lord of lords,
Who stooped to wear our mortal clay,
Earth joins with heaven in the chords
That hailed Thee Conqueror to-day.

Though tears may fall like summer rain,
Though sorrow linger for a night,
Thy sweet compassion easeth pain,
Beneath Thy smile the world is bright.

To Thee, dear Lord of death and life,
Thyself our strength, Thy love our stay,
Victorious in the utmost strife,
We hail Thee on this Easter Day.

THE HOUSE OF OBED EDOM

The house of Obed Edom,
Where safe the ark abode,
What time were wars and fightings
On every mountain road,
What time was pitched the battle
In every valley fair,
The house of Obed Edom
Had peace beyond compare.

With famine on the border
And fury in the camp,
With the starving children huddled
In the black tent's shivering damp,
With the mothers crying sadly
And every moan a prayer—
In the house of Obed Edom
Was neither want nor care.

The fields of Obed Edom,
No foeman trod them down;

The House of Obed Edom

The towers of Obed Edom
Were like a fortressed town ;
And only grace and gladness
Came speeding on the road
To the house of Obed Edom,
Wherein the ark abode.

And far and near they told it,
The men who passed that way,
How fell Jehovah's blessing
On that home by night and day ;
How the smallest to the greatest
Had joy and hope and love,
While the roof of Obed Edom
Was watched by God above.

The line of Obed Edom
Is on the earth to-day ;
In the house of Obed Edom
Still he may safely stay,
Who, dearer than all treasure
For which men toil and plod,
Shall prize the covenant-blessing,
The hallowed ark of God.

The House of Obed Edom

And never strife nor clamor
Shall break the tranquil spell
In which our Lord's beloved
Forever safely dwell.
In the house of Obed Edom,
In the sunlight or the dark,
Abides the ceaseless blessing
That rests within the ark.

HER WEDDING RING

Fold the weary toil-worn hands
On the quiet breast.
All the tasks are finished now,
Let her sleep and rest.
Never gem of price had she,
Never costly lace,
Pain and sorrow wrought their lines
On her patient face.

But her wasted finger wears,
Loose the golden band
That had been a queenly sign
On her faithful hand.
King to consort could no more
Than this symbol give.
In her slender wedding ring
Did such magic live,
That she walked in modest pride
On her thorny road.
And with courage undismayed
Bore her heaviest load.

Her Wedding Ring

Fold her weary hands to-day,
 Softly o'er her sing.
She was leal and loyal aye —
 See her wedding ring!
There are those in purple drest,
 And with jewels brave,
Who less royally step down
 To the regal grave.
Never stain hath touched the hand
 That through loss and dole
Kept the wedded honor safe,
 Kept the home-love whole.

ON CHRISTMAS MORN

They fared across the lonely plains,
They dared the desert way.
Above them moved the starry trains
That rest not, night nor day.
One Star from out the splendor shone,
A rift of heaven's own light,
In fearless faith they followed on,
Their eager faces bright.

Three kings were they of great renown,
And from the East afar,
Until it stood o'er Bethlehem town,
They journeyed by the Star.
It stood above a cattle shed,
And there its light grew dim.
To heaven's own Child the Star had led ;
Its glory paled for Him.

Immanuel ! A little Child
That very day new-born.

On Christmas Morn

They knelt before the undefiled
That earliest Christmas morn.
Each head was bent to give him praise.
Their incense, gold and myrrh
They offered Him in glad amaze
Each humble worshiper.

What gifts have we for Christ to-day?
We, too, have seen the Star.
And we have found the happy way
To Bethlehem afar.
Our gold, our myrrh, our incense sweet,
Shall we not hither bring?
Ah, let us haste to kiss His feet,
The little Christ, our King.

THE ENGINEER

Hand on the throttle, eye on the track,
Steady and ready, grizzled and black,
Brief of speech, the swift hours through,
With the sense to see and the nerve to do ;
By a touch controlling the tireless might
That courses onward through day and night,
Kin to danger but stranger to fear,
This is the flyer's engineer.

As lover to lady he bends his gaze
On the fierce companion his finger sways ;
Other men, they have other jobs,
His is to note how her great heart throbs.
He wouldn't one whit be more content
If he bore the name of President.
Kin to danger but stranger to fear,
A health to the flyer's engineer.

There's the wife ! and a smile creeps 'round his
mouth,

The Engineer

As if the wind blew straight from the south ;
There, tucked at home in their cozy beds
Are the babies. Bless their curly heads !
The wife and the bairns ; in the back of his
mind

The watching angels those dear ones find.
He never forgets them ; grizzled, black,
Eyes like a flame on the forward track,
For this is his train that must forge amain
Across prairie and valley and mountain-chain ;
To-morrow for love and love's sweet breath,
To-day, perchance, 'tis a dance with death.
Kin to danger and stranger to fear,
Here's a health to the flyer's engineer.

If somewhere there happen a misplaced switch,
If somewhere there happen a bridgeless ditch,
An open draw, or a broken rail,
A signal blurred, or a loosened nail —
He'll stick by his train as best he can,
Die if he must — just an average man.
A hero, dismissed in a single line,
But haloed and starred in the Book Divine.
Kin to danger and stranger to fear,
Known as the flyer's engineer.

LUCY

She was always little Lucy, always bent above a book;

Something far away and thoughtful in her gentle, pensive look:

Always with a magic secret bird and beast to woo and tame,

Knowing every tree and flower, every bit of moss by name.

Little Lucy when a maiden grave and eager, both in one,

Faithful, fearless, self-forgetful, from the dawn till set of sun.

Little Lucy to her lover when he sought her as his bride,

Lucy, light upon his pathway, ever thenceforth true and tried.

She was always little Lucy, busy to the very end;

Lucy

O the days were blank without her, she who was
so staunch a friend,
When she slipped into the darkness, in the noon-
tide of the year,
Quick the shadows round us gathered, and we
missed her far and near.

CAPTAIN ABNER'S OPINION

Give me the Bible, Jennie, the good old Book
for me;

The one I've loved and leaned upon in storms on
land and sea.

It's been a pillow for my head in many a sleep-
less night,

It's been a heaven-guiding star to give me cheer
and light.

Don't bring that new revision, I'm not in need
of change,

The music is not quite the same if chord and
key are strange.

I like the dear old-fashioned words I learned at
mother's knee.

Bring me the Bible, Jennie, the good old Book
for me.

Our parson in the pulpit explains the meanings
well;

Captain Abner's Opinion

To him the slightly altered phrase is like a silver bell.

To me a change is out of tune ; it does not sound so sweet,

You ken I'm watching daily for the Master's coming feet.

I'm listening should He call me, I long His knock to hear ;

If for me He has a message, I want it plain and clear.

I'm not a scholar, Jennie, I'm only what you see,
And the Bible I have always had is the best of books for me.

I sailed the ocean, Jennie, when I was but a lad ;
Sea-faring men get close to God when tempests rave like mad.

In the darkness of wild weather the sky was overcast,

But I trod the deck in safety and came to port at last.

When the Master was on earth, dear, He seemed to like the sea,

And once He hushed a driving storm on the Lake of Galilee ;

Captain Abner's Opinion

When I was but a little chap I mind I used to
look

At a picture mother had of Him, 'twas in her
dear old Book.

At the wedding and the funeral, whene'er the
heart is full,

It craves the thing it understands, old memories
tug and pull.

To just an average man like me there comes a
sense of loss,

A feeling that a hand profane might touch the
Crown and Cross;

That from the East the Star might fade, the
Manger disappear,

The Virgin Mother and the Child grow dimmer
year by year,

If one by one the miracles were all explained
away

In the scientific brightness of our glaring mod-
ern day.

What I'm afraid of, Jennie, is the tiny entering
wedge;

The field is bare to every one if a gap be in the
hedge.

Captain Abner's Opinion

I like my Bible as it is, a well of water sweet,
Where thirsty souls may rest themselves, and
drink, in sun and heat.
The minister may need it, but we common folk
can wait
To find our new revision when we reach the
pearly gate.
I want it as it is, my dear, its pith and poetry ;
Bring me my Bible, Jennie, the good old Book
for me.

TWO THANKSGIVINGS

MISS LUCINDA'S.

But why do I keep Thanksgiving?

Did I hear you aright, my dear?

Why? When I'm all alone in life,

Not a chick or a child to be near,

John's folks all away in the West,

Lucy across the sea,

And not a soul in the dear old home

Save a little bound girl and me?

It does look lonesome, I grant it;

Yet strange as the thing may sound,

I'm seldom in want of company

The whole of the merry year round —

There's spring when the lilac blossoms,

And the orchards flush to bloom,

There's summer when great moths flit and glance

Through the twilight's star-lit gloom.

Two Thanksgivings

Then comes the beautiful autumn,
When every fragrant briar,
Flinging its garlands on fence and wall,
Is bright as a living fire;
And then the white, still winter time,
When the snow lies warm on the wheat,
And I think of the days that have passed away,
When my life was young and sweet.

I'm a very happy woman
To-day, though my hair is white,
For some of my troubles I've overlived,
And some I keep out of sight.
I'm a busy old woman, you see, dear,
As I travel along life's road,
I'm always trying as best I can
To lighten my neighbor's load.

That child? You should think she'd try me?
Does she earn her bread and salt?
You've noticed she's sometimes indolent,
And indolence *is* a fault?
Of course it is, but the orphan girl
Is growing as fast as she can,
And to make her work from dawn till dark
Was never a part of my plan.

Two Thanksgivings

I like to see the dimples
 Flash out on the little face
That was wan enough, and still enough,
 When first she came to the place.
I think she'll do, when she's older;
 A kitten is not a cat,
And now that I look at the thing, my dear,
 I hope she'll never be *that*.

I'm thankful that life is peaceful;
 I should just be sick of strife,
If, for instance, I had to live along
 Like poor Job Slocum's wife;
I'm thankful I didn't say "yes," my dear —
 What saved me I do not see —
When Job, with a sprig in his button hole,
 Once came a-courting me.

I'm thankful I'm neither poor nor rich,
 Glad that I'm not in debt;
That I owe no money I cannot pay,
 And so have no call to fret.
I'm thankful so many love me,
 And that I've so many to love,
Though my dearest and nearest are all at home
 In the beautiful land above.

Two Thanksgivings

I shall always keep Thanksgiving
In the good old-fashioned way,
And think of the reasons for gratitude,
In December, and June, and May.
In August, November and April,
And the months that come between ;
For God is good, and my heart is light,
And I'd not change place with a queen.

UNCLE RUBE'S.

Of land I own no acre, nor wife or child have I,
Up on the hillside yonder my dearest kindred lie.
My youth I've left behind me, my years are
growing few,
But I can keep Thanksgiving with the happiest
one of you.

No man in this great world of God can hold the
stars in fee,
Or map for his advantage the wide and billowy
sea.
The sky, the fields, the open plain, the road I
travel on
Are mine to love, are mine for life, till sinks my
latest sun.

Two Thanksgivings

The children run to meet me, and clasp my wrinkled hands,

The babies prattle merrily, and Uncle understands.

There's not a hearth-side in the town but has a place for me;

To many a heart both young and old, I have the comrade's key.

The very dogs are friendly as I go about the town,

The wild birds in the woodland at my call come flying down.

I've never yet been lonesome though I've often been alone,

For the little forest creatures are as children of my own.

If the young folk want a frolic, I tune my fiddle strings,

And up and down the barn they flit as if their feet were wings.

If there's trouble in the village I can lend a hand to aid,

And in fever spells and sickness I can nurse them undismayed.

Two Thanksgivings

So, though I'm old and rather poor, I do not
envy wealth.

I'm tough and strong as some old tree, I know the
joy of health.

I try to live in thankfulness, I'm grateful all the
way,

I'm everybody's Uncle Rube when comes
Thanksgiving day.

Each table has a seat for me, each farmhouse
counts me guest,

The countryside is mine in love, not one than I
more blest.

I'll lift a song of praise to God, His happy
child am I,

Although I own no foot of land, beneath God's
bending sky.

BUYING CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

I've been buying Christmas presents,
Roving from shop to shop;
I've a troop of friends to plan for,
And I never know where to stop.
I begin to save for December
Before the first of May,
And I'm bankrupt till the spring returns,
After each Christmas day.

I take my dearest dear ones
First on my Christmas list —
My rosy, dimpled darlings,
With faces made to be kissed.
And the lovely bright-eyed mother,
Wherever she sets her chair,
In the nursery or the parlor,
The center of home is there.

For her should be spoils of jewels,
Velvet and lace in store,

Buying Christmas Presents

Raiment to trail its splendors
Over our homely floor.
But her frown of grave discretion
Still holds my zeal in check,
And her gentle "Dear, be careful!"
Is strong as a monarch's beck.

And Tom, my sturdy first born,
And my roguish, manly Fred,
'Tis little to think of skates for one,
And the other must have a sled,
And my dainty baby Margaret,
And my winsome maiden Ruth,
I'll see that their Christmas stockings
Are full to the brim, in sooth.

Next come a host of cousins —
We are rich in kith and kin,
Their numbers muster bravely,
With the babies counted in.
Beyond these are the needy
Our Christmas feast to share,
And the worn and heavy hearted,
Who are ever in our care.

Buying Christmas Presents

In flock the joyous children,
Laden with fir and pine,
And the scarlet holly berries,
Their stars and wreaths to twine.
I sit and watch and listen,
Till I almost fall asleep,
And over my weary senses
The drifting odors sweep.

And somehow, this Christmas fading,
I am back in the long ago,
When I was a jolly youngster
Trudging to school in the snow.
The dear old farmhouse kitchen
And the old brown district school
Come back like an angel's vision,
Though stern I thought their rule.

I have lost the sweet old mother,
And the father strict and kind,
Whose word was law to the children —
A law they loved to mind.
They are not on the earth for loving;
They have left the weary road,
And they hear the Christmas music
On the golden hills of God.

Buying Christmas Presents

But I'm better for their teachings,
And on to the very end
I will try to walk as they did,
With the Christ for my blessed Friend.
I will try to teach the children
That love is the best of creeds,
And that he who cares for his neighbor
His own cause ever pleads.

Yes, dear, it is "Merry Christmas!"
And you really should not scold
If a man forgets at Christmas
That he is not made of gold.
Why, I've saved for my Christmas presents
Quite since the first of May,
And I like to be bankrupt for a while
After the Christmas day.

FACE TO FACE WITH TROUBLE

You are face to face with trouble,
And the skies are murk and gray;
You hardly know which way to turn,
You are almost dazed, you say.
And at night you wake to wonder
What the next day's news will bring;
Your pillow is brushed by phantom care
With a grim and ghastly wing.

You are face to face with trouble;
A child has gone astray;
A ship is wrecked on the bitter sea;
There's a debt you cannot pay;
Your brave right hand is feeble;
Your sight is growing blind;
Perhaps a friend is cold and stern
Who was ever warm and kind.

You are face to face with trouble;
No wonder you cannot sleep;

Face to Face With Trouble

But wait, and think of the promise,
The Lord will safely keep,
And lead you out of the thicket,
And into the pasture-land ;
You have only to walk straight onward,
Holding the dear Lord's hand.

Face to face with trouble ;
And did you forget to look,
As a good old father taught you,
For help, to the dear old Book ?
You have heard the tempter whisper,
And you've had no heart to pray,
And God was dropped from your scheme of life,
O ! for many a weary day !

Then face to face with trouble ;
It is thus He calls you back
From the land of dearth and famine
To the land that has no lack.
You would not hear in the sunshine ;
You hear in the midnight gloom ;
Behold. His tapers kindle
Like stars in the quiet room.

Face to Face With Trouble

O! face to face with trouble,
Friend, I have often stood;
To learn that pain hath sweetness,
To know that God is good.
Arise and meet the daylight,
Be strong and do your best
With an honest heart, and a child-like faith
That God will do the rest.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Child of the boundless prairie, son of the virgin soil,

Heir to the bearing of burdens, brother to them that toil;

God and Nature together shaped him to lead in the van,

In the stress of the wildest weather, when the nation needed a man.

Eyes of a smoldering fire, heart of a lion at bay,

Patience to plan for to-morrow, valor to serve for to-day;

Mournful and mirthful and tender, quick as a flash with a jest,

Hiding with gibe and great laughter the ache that was dull in his breast!

Met were the men and the hour,— man who was strong for the shock —

Abraham Lincoln

Fierce were the lightnings unleashed: in the
midst, he stood fast as a rock.

Comrade he was and commander, he who was
born for the time,

Iron in council and action, simple, aloof and
sublime.

Swift slip the years from their tether, centuries
pass like a breath,

Only some lives are immortal, challenging dark-
ness and death.

Hewn from the stuff of the martyrs, write in the
star-dust his name,

Glowing, untarnished, transcendent, high on the
records of Fame.

“LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED”

’Twas the Master Himself Who said it
To the sorrowful little band,
Facing an hour of darkness
That they could not understand.
The light of their lives was fading,
Their eyes with tears were dim,
The rugged men were shaken
At the thought of losing Him.

“Let not your heart be troubled.”
Never was voice so sweet,
Never was look more kingly,
Nor assurance more complete.
“Let not your heart be troubled,
Ye believe in God Most High,
And one with God the Father,
Equal with Him am I.”

“Let not Your Heart be Troubled”

“ Let not your heart be troubled,
In the day of an utter loss.”

It was Christ himself Who said it,
Before Him the scourge and the Cross,
It was Christ Himself Who said it
To the loved He called His own,
Before Him the resurrection
And the seat on the Father’s throne.

“ Let not your heart be troubled.”
Shall we take that comfort now?
Why should we walk in darkness?
Why furrow with pain the brow?
Why should the little trials
Loom large on the common road?
Why should we tremble and falter
At the weight of the daily load?

“ Let not your heart be troubled
’Twixt the darkness and the dawn,
From the bitter cup of anguish
Are draughts of sweetness drawn.
Let not your heart be troubled
Though ye stand by an open grave,
In the hour of deep bereavement
Be confident and brave.”

“Let not Your Heart be Troubled”

“Let not your heart be troubled”

At the thought of the vast unknown.

Through the door at the end of the journey

Ye shall not step alone.

For He Who died to save you

Shall come again at the last,

And He will stay beside you

Till death itself is past.

“Let not your heart be troubled,”

The earth life is so brief,

And evermore from heaven

The angels bring relief.

Look in the face of the Master,

List to His gentle voice;

Whatever He choose to send you

Look up, believe and rejoice.

THE SECRET OF PEACE

Amid the clamor and the din,
The tumult and the jarring chords,
The sweetest peace shall enter in
To whom can say, “I am the Lord’s.”

Deep underneath the storm-swept sea
An everlasting calm abides;
’Tis theirs who list His “Come to Me,”
Across the waste of throbbing tides.

What boots it that with meager fare
And scanty store, the way we take;
If we with Him a crust can share,
He shall our loaf divinely break.

Some little thing for Him to do,
Some little word for Him to say,
Some wandering soul to Him to woo,
Some meeting with Him in the way,



The Secret of Peace

And earth grows beautiful with heaven,
And weakness clothes itself with strength.
And love is freed from sordid leaven,
And loss and pain are gain at length.

To whom can say with fervent heart,
And largess of the spirit's wealth,
"I, with the Master, have my part,"
Come peace and hope and joy and health.

Amid the clamor and the din,
To whom can say, "I am the Lord's,"
The fullest peace shall enter in,
And harmonize the jarring chords.

WHY DO YOU WORRY?

Why do you worry, and pucker your brow,
And walk with a down-cast, lowering look?
You have only to struggle in Here and Now,
You have turned no leaf in the Future's book.

You are wearing yourself into shreds and bits,
Over the ill that the morrow may bring,
You are filling your day with absurd misfits,
When you ought to be royal in robe and ring.

The wee little bird in the fragile nest
Is safe, though the tempest may rage abroad,
The dear All-Father, Who loves you best,
And cares for you ever, is Sovereign God.

Why worry and fret over gain or loss,
Why trouble yourself over earthly wealth,
That may break like a bubble, the players toss?
Why pine lest a robber should come by
stealth?

Why Do You Worry?

Why worry o'er illness, when God's kind hand
Is ready to drive all pain away?

Why shadow the light of this happy land,
By treading in Misery's dreary way?

There's nothing so foolish, believe me, friends,
As the folly that eats like the moth and rust;
That refuses to take what the good Lord sends,
And dims our gold with the trail of the dust.

When we reach that door that shall let us in
To the peace of Home, and the endless rest,
We shall leave behind us strife and sin,
And worry that darkens our lives at best.

Why worry? O child of immortal birth,
Forget the promptings that bind in thrall
A soul that was sent to serve on earth,
But must finally reign with the Lord of all.

THANKSGIVING

We have so much to thank Thee for,
Lord of the vintage and the sheaf,
Of garden flower and forest leaf,
Our praises climb to more and more.

For never were our barns so pressed
With golden weight of fragrant grain,
And fruits that came in perfumed train,
Till Nature bade the fair land rest.

Our ships that furrow every sea
Fare onward with the great world's bread;
The peoples from our granaries fed
Send up their meed of thanks to thee.

Lord of the wave, and of the shore,
Lord of the winds that wander wide,
Lord of the planets and the tide,
We praise and bless Thee more and more.

Thanksgiving

And most of all for household mirth,
For mother's smile and lisp of child,
For love by no false lure beguiled,
We praise Thee, Lord of home and hearth.

SILVER OR COPPER?

It was only a silver sixpence,
Battered and worn and old,
But worth to the child that held it
As much as a piece of gold.

A poor little crossing-sweeper,
In the wind and rain all day —
For one who gave her a penny
There were twenty who said her nay.

But she carried the bit of silver —
A light in her steady face,
And her step on the crowded pavement
Full of a childish grace —

Straight to the tender pastor;
And “Send it,” she said, “for me,
Dear sir, to the heathen children
On the other side of the sea.

Silver or Copper?

“Let it help in telling the story
Of the love of the Lord most high,
Who came from the world of glory
For a sinful world to die.”

“Send only half of it, Maggie,”
The good old minister said,
“And keep the rest for yourself, dear;
You need it for daily bread.”

“Ah, sir,” was the ready answer,
In the blessed Bible words,
“I would rather lend it to Jesus:
For the silver and gold are the Lord’s,

“And the copper will do for Maggie.”
I think if we all felt so,
The wonderful message of pardon
Would soon through the dark earth go.

Soon should the distant mountains
And the far-off isles of the sea
Hear of the great salvation
And the truth that makes men free.

Silver or Copper?

Alas! do we not too often
 Keep our silver and gold in store,
And grudgingly part with our copper,
 Counting the pennies o'er,

And claiming in vain the blessing,
 That the Master gave to one
Who dropped her mites as the treasure
 A whole day's toil had won?

ENNUI

So very tired! The days pass by
One like its fellow, nothing bright
Rifts the dull torpor of the sky,
The hours creep on from morn till night.

So very tired! No star of hope
With beckoning ray points to the goal.
There is no goal! no gates that ope
The prison of this weary soul.

WHOSE COMPASSIONS FAIL NOT

You may weary your friend and neighbor,

 You may seek for his aid in vain,

You may waste your strength and your labor,

 And your griefs, they may come in a train;

No voice shall respond to your weeping;

 All ears shall be deaf to your cry,

And sorrowful, waking or sleeping,

 The days of your years shall drift by.

But the heart of the Father will hold you

 In love that can never let go.

The grace of the Father will fold you

 The closer, the deeper the woe.

You cannot wear out His compassion,

 You cannot waft one stricken prayer

In your faltering timorous fashion,

 To His throne from your deeps of despair,

Whose Compassions Fail Not

But swift shall He send you a guerdon,
And more than you ask shall He give,
And his hand shall unloose your great burden
And free in His light shall you live.

THE SOUL'S SAFEGUARD

When bitter winds of trouble blow,
And thou art tossing to and fro,
When waves are rolling mountains high,
And clouds obscure the steadfast sky,
Fear not, my soul ; the Lord is there.
Betake thyself, my soul, to prayer.

When in the dull routine of life
Thou yearnest half for pain and strife,
So weary of the commonplace,
Of days that wear the self-same face,
Think softly, soul ; thy Lord is there.
And then betake thyself to prayer.

When brims thy cup with sparkling joy,
When happy tasks the hour employ,
When men with praise and sweet acclaim
Upon the highway speak thy name,
Then, soul, I bid thee have a care ;
Seek oft thy Lord in fervent prayer.

The Soul's Safeguard

If standing where two pathways meet,
Each beckoning thy pilgrim feet,
Thou art in doubt which road to take,
Look up, and say: “For thy dear sake —
O Master! show Thy footprints fair —
I’d follow Thee.” Christ answers prayer.

The tempter oft, with wily toil,
Seeks thee, my soul, as precious spoil;
His weapons never lose their edge,
But thou art heaven’s peculiar pledge,
Though Satan rage, thy Lord is there —
Dear soul, betake thyself to prayer.

ONE OF THESE DAYS

One of these days it will all be over,
Sorrow and laughter, loss and gain,
Meetings and partings of friend and lover,
Joy that was often tinged with pain.
One of these days will our hands be folded,
One of these days will the work be done,
Finished the pattern our lives have molded,
Ended our labor beneath the sun.

One of these days will the heartache leave us,
One of these days will the burden drop ;
Never again shall a hope deceive us,
Never again shall our progress stop.
Freed from the blight of the vain endeavor,
Winged with the health of immortal life,
One of these days we shall quit forever
All that is vexing in earthly strife.

One of these days we shall know the reason,
Haply, of much that perplexes now ;

One of These Days

One of these days, in the Lord's good season,
 Light of His peace shall adorn the brow.
Blessèd, though out of tribulation,
 Lifted to dwell in His sun-bright smile,
Happy to share the great salvation,
 Can we not patiently tarry awhile?

A HAPPY NEW YEAR

(DARBY TO JOAN)

When life was new and skies were blue,
And all the world was blithe and true,
It seemed a little thing to say,
“I wish you, Love, a happy day;”
It were an easy thing, my dear,
To wish you gladness and good cheer;
The words fell tripping from the tongue,
White flakes were like rose-petals flung;
With all to hope and naught to fear,
Came laughing in each gay New Year.

Together, wife, we've challenged life,
We've braced to meet its utmost strife.
Our hearts have not grown faint with time,
Our feet are not too old to climb
With sturdy step and fearless pace,
Though slower in the onward race.
Still do we gather roses red,
Still march with brave uplifted head,

A Happy New Year

And still at eventide we lift
Our songs of praise through storm and drift;
God grant us courage and good cheer!
And so we'll hail a glad New Year.

This land of ours where Fortune showers
Her fairy gifts like summer flowers,
Has given us no golden wealth,
But only store of joy and health.
Hard work we've known and scanty wage
Upon our rugged pilgrimage.
But we have earned before we've spent,
Have dwelt in honor and content.
No man we owe, no frown we fear:
Well may we claim a happy year.

O Love of mine, we shall not pine!
There is no thought of thine or mine,
As hand in hand we keep the road
With cheer that lightens every load.
Old years like shadows pass away,
Just hour by hour and day by day.
New Years appear in roseate grace,
Our little home's a sunny place.
God bless you comrade, leal and dear,
God give us both a glad New Year.

THE BABY'S HAND

Little roseleaf, dimpled hand,
Fingers tightly holding mine;
Not a grasp in all the land
Half so strong as thine.

SHOW ME THYSELF

When the waves of trouble roll
O'er the weary, burdened soul,
Saviour, I shall strengthened be,
If Thou show Thyself to me!

When the sun of joy is bright,
And I revel in its light,
Lest earth's bliss too dazzling be,
Manifest Thyself to me!

When I wander from the way,
In the paths of danger stray,
Bending down in mercy free,
Saviour, show Thyself to me!

Spirit, Comforter divine!
Be my heart Thy blessed shrine!
From the tempter's snares set free,
Come and show Thyself to me!

Show Me Thyself

While earth's suns and shadows meet,
Mingling round my pilgrim feet,
Till in heaven I rest with Thee,
Saviour, show Thyself to me!

JESUS HIMSELF DREW NEAR

We had wrought till the brain was weary;
We had toiled till the hands were numb;
The look of the day was dreary,
And the song on our lips grew dumb.
When lo! in a sudden gleaming
Came the glow of a wonderful cheer;
We were neither asleep nor dreaming,
When the Master Himself drew near.

Our hands that the tasks had hardened
He held in a nail-pierced hand;
Our hearts that were heavy and burdened
He was swift to understand.
All in an instant, heaven
Had brought its brightness here;
We had sinned, but were sin-forgiven:
The Master Himself drew near.

We sat in the halls of feasting;
We were glad as the children are;

Jesus Himself Drew Near

Over our path no shadow;
We had fought with never a scar.
In the midst of our deep rejoicing
Did there come a shiver of fear?
Nay, foolish heart and faithless,
For the Master Himself drew near.

And He blessed the loaf, and brake it;
And the cup Himself He poured;
And He told us that joy and gladness
Were ours in the light of the Lord;
So we know that bliss or sorrow,
The ache, or the smile, or the tear,
Is each in its turn a blessing
When the Master Himself draws near.

So hallowed a thing is living,
So beautiful daily toil,
When the Christ we follow is giving
Better than earthly spoil;
So close are we held in His keeping,
We never may doubt or fear;
To His own, in waking or sleeping,
The Master Himself draws near.

EACH BY NAME

Never a little foolish lamb astray in the twilight dim

But the tender Shepherd knoweth its name, and calleth it home to Him.

In the flock and the fold the sheep are His, and He keepeth them close in care;

And each for itself in the Shepherd's heart hath its own peculiar share.

Never a moor so wrapped in mist, nor a hill so gray and dun,

But the Shepherd counteth His lambkins there, and watcheth them one by one.

Never a day so bleak and chill, nor a night so dark and drear,

But the tireless love of the Shepherd waits for the sheep that are passing dear.

Never a weary, wayworn sheep in the great world flock to-day

Each by Name

But may hear the call of the Shepherd's voice,
may follow Him and obey.

The Shepherd hath ransomed the great world-
flock, he hath bought it for His own;

And He loveth and guardeth it one by one, as
were each in the world alone.

WHEN JESUS CAME TO BETHLEHEM

When Jesus came to Bethlehem,
All in the rose of dawn,
The music quivered like a flame
From heaven's own glory drawn,
The sky and earth were blended in
A symphony of love
What time there came to Mary's arms
The Child from heaven above.

A lowly place the stable was,
Yet never palace halls
Enshrined such brightness as was framed
Within its glimmering walls,
When Mary held her little one,
And looked upon His face,
And knew that God had given her
The Child, to save the race.

The little Christ-child was so sweet,
Had you been there, or I,

When Jesus Came to Bethlehem

We would have kissed those tiny feet,
Have hushed that baby's cry ;
We might have knelt, and offered gifts,
Our gold, our spice, our myrrh ;
We might have wreathed the manger with
Our cedar, pine and fir.

One day those little feet should tread
The toilsome ways of men.
One day those little hands be pierced —
Did Mary dream it then?
Ah, no, she only knew that heaven
Had filled her soul with joy,
She bent in mother blessedness
Above her firstborn Boy.

Christ, give to us this Christmas day,
Such love as here He brought
To simple folk and kingly folk —
Such grace as here He wrought
In hearts of those who followed Him.
Christ bless us all this day,
And give us peace, and give us heaven
To crown our pilgrim way.

LOVE'S GUEST

When summer waned, and nights grew long,
And winds blew cold across the sea,
O homeless Saviour of mankind,
There were who ministered to Thee.

They gave Thee of their humble fare;
Thy seat was close beside their fire,
And Thou didst heal them of their hurt,
Didst satisfy their heart's desire.

Still art Thou homeless where the throngs
Go hurrying past, nor think of Thee;
As homeless yet as when the gales
Stormed o'er the waves of Galilee.

But, as of old, some door swings wide;
Thou enterest, love's divinest guest;
And, when Thou sharest loaf and cup,
The lowliest meal is bright and blest.

Love's Guest

There are who minister to Thee ;
Lord, give us grace to join their band ;
To fare from dawn to evensong
Thy comrades, in Immanuel's land.

OUR COUNTRY

By the sweep of rejoicing rivers
That rush to the mighty sea,
By the waves on our coasts that thunder,
By the winds that are wild and free,
By the stars in heaven above us,
By the forests of pine and palm,
By the strength of the hearts that love us,
By the valor serene and calm,
Of our young men strong for toiling,
Of our old men, wise and brave,
By the Glory of days departed,
By many a hero's grave;
Oh blessed, beautiful country,
We pledge thee our deathless faith.
The thought of an ill that can wound thee,
We flout as a bloodless wraith.

Oh beautiful, blessed country,
God-given for all the world,

Our Country

For the poor and the alien ever
 Be the flag of thy stars unfurled.
From the ends of the earth they seek thee,
 Down-trodden and long oppressed;
From the mystic East they are hastening
 To the light of the glowing West.
There is room for the child and the mother,
 Room for the peasant-born,
Room where we till our vineyards,
 Room where we plant our corn.
Let the weary ones find shelter
 And the lowliest ones a home,
Here where thine arms enfolds them
 With greetings for all who come.

Oh beautiful, blessed country,
 God meant for the wide, wide world;
Let the gifts of thy generous bounty
 Fail not till thy flag is furled.
By the wealth of the ore beneath thee,
 By thine acres of golden wheat,
By the flowers in field and garden,
 By the laughter of children, sweet,
By the treasure that God hath sent thee,
 By the freedom of church and press,

Our Country

Thou art pledged to rescue the starving
And succor the world's distress.
Thou must break to the famine stricken
The bread that belongs to thee,
Thou must tell the sad and lonely
The love that is theirs to be.
By the Cross of Christ and His passion,
In the might that is born of prayer,
Oh beautiful, blessed country
Thou must lighten the earth's despair.

THE WHITE ROSE-BUSH

You see when the white rose blooms again,
A sweet old-fashioned flower of June,
That has smiles of love for the wind and rain,
And is somehow with bees and birds atune.
It is not the rose for the florist's shop,
It is meek and lowly and has no pride;
But I treasure its petals as they drop;
It was grandmother's rose, when she came a
bride:
Leaning so tenderly on his arm,
When grandfather brought her home to the
farm.

She was small and lissome, a brown-haired girl,
With eyes that were bits of the sky so blue.
She had given herself to the wooer bold
Who had pledged his troth to be ever true.
The rose-bush tapped in a friendly way
On the pane, when their first home-meal was
spread,

The White Rose-Bush

And it wafted its perfume many a day
To the wife as she kneaded her sweet home
bread.
They told their love, their secrets dear,
Oh, years and years, where the rose could
hear.

Patter, patter, came tiny feet
Running over the kitchen floor;
Prattle and lisp, came voices sweet
Echoing round the kitchen door.
And the dimpled fingers clutched at the bloom
When summer by summer the white rose
smiled
And added its gladness to roof and room
Gay with the grace of many a child.
Through sunshine and snowfall the children
grew,
And they knew the rose but never the rue.

The children are scattered wide and far;
There are strangers now in the dear old
place;
Men born under a distant star,
Women who come of an alien race.

The White Rose-Bush

The old folks sleep on the hill-slope where
The wild winds murmur and wail at night;
Side by side, with never a care,
They fell asleep in the waning light.
Deep and peaceful is their repose;
I would 'twere under the old white rose.

WHY?

Why look at the shadow
Unless to remind
Your heart, that the sunbeam
Is somewhere behind,
Unless to reflect that both shadow and shine
Are sent by the love of the Father Divine?

OUR SOLDIER BOYS

Forgotten in their quiet beds, the silent soldiers
sleep,

Above them all the flitting years, the stars
like sentries stand:

These men, who in their joyous youth, left off
to sow and reap,

And marched, and fought, and died, to save
their honored native land.

They hear no tocsin as they lie, with faces sky-
ward turned;

The flag they loved above them flies ; its folds
they cannot see.

And most who mourned them once, are gone.
No grieving heart hath yearned

Of late, to have them back again in earth's
great family.

Yet precious in the Father's sight, the sacrifice
they made ;

And well remembered at the throne, the names
that here they bore.

Our Soldier Boys

For not in vain these heroes knelt and felt
 faith's accolade,
And went to fame's Valhalla to be knightly
 evermore.

Our roses wet with shining dew, our lilies stain-
 less white,
Our flowers plucked by gentle hands, upon
 their graves we'll lay.
And somehow, we are sure, that they are hal-
 lowed in God's sight,
These who were true, though some wore blue,
 and some wore sadder gray.

BETWEEN THE SHEARS

Both sides are standing firm,
Jaws set, eyes stern, hands clenched,
Neither will yield an inch,
Not a face has wavered or blenched.

Masters and men alike
Have the battle-joy in their blood;
Week after week of the strike,
And neither has aught to the good.

But step this way, if you please:—
Look at the bowed gray head!
See the women on their knees,
Hear the children crying for bread!

Rust on the workman's tools;
Rust in the rich man's heart;
Dust in the locked-up mills;
And the wage and the work apart.

Between the Shears

And the children crying for bread.
The children are wanting shoes;
What does it matter who wins,
Whether they gain or lose?

The cloth between the shears,
Are the old, and the little ones,
And the wives, who bear the brunt,
'Twixt rising and setting suns.

WHEN SUMMER ENDS

When Summer sifts her latest sands,
 And the Autumn's at the door,
When far and wide the golden lands,
 Are bare as broom-swept floor;
When all the fruit is gathered in,
 And all the vines are sere,
Then thou and I shall face, my love,
 The Winter of the year.

Then thou and I shall bar the door,
 And light the ruddy flame,
And tell the summer's gladness o'er,
 And tell how love first came;
Nor will we grieve for summer gone,
 Beside that glowing fire,
When winter dusk and winter dawn
 Chill not our heart's desire.

MARY

O Mother Mary, did you see
The shadow-cross that followed Him,
When playing near the olive tree,
What time the day grew dim?

O Mother Mary, did you hear
The mocking cries that hooted Him,
When He came from the synagogue,
What time the day grew dim?

“ Nay,” sweetly comes the answer now,
From heights of heaven, “ I never feared:
I only knew my Child of Heaven
Was more then He to men appeared.

“ I only watched, and loved Him well;
I knew but vaguely, in my heart;
I often pondered many things
What time I sat apart.

Mary

“ And when His baby head was pressed
Against my throbbing heart, I prayed
God keep the nursling on my breast:
My heart was not afraid.”

AN OLD-FASHIONED GARDEN

Four o'clock and prince's feather,
Lady-slippers, wilding thyme,
Pinks and purple flox together,
Ribbon grass to bind my rhyme,
And the lilies in the middle,
And the roses at the rim,
Color, scent, and tangled beauty,
Filled that garden to the brim.

IN THE SHADOW — A REQUIEM

In the shadow as in the shine,
I have loved you, dearest, and called you mine.

I have known your truth in the cloudy day,
I have walked with you on the world's high-way.

Step by step in our ups and downs,
In the lonesome dale, in the thronging towns,

Comrades together have been we two
When skies were gray, when skies were blue.

Now, when the veil has dropped between
The world we see and the world unseen,

Now, when I sit here, all bereft,
When you are taken, and I am left,

I am glad for the years in shadow and shine
When love made water the richest wine,

In the Shadow—A Requiem

When the crust was a feast, and the loaf was
shared,

And nothing we feared and all things dared.

You are surely waiting, wherever you are,
Till the door you passed through shall swing
ajar,

And let me in to touch your hand
And make you at home in the strange new
land;

For as certain am I, as I live by breath,
That love is stronger and greater than death,

And they who have loved, shall win at last
To the glory where death is forever past.

WHEN SOUTH WINDS BLOW

There is not a windy corner left
Where the bitter gales were sharp,
That is not this morning, music-cleft
By the sound of the zephyr's harp.
The south winds blow, and the buds unclose,
The daffodils laugh in light ;
We are hurrying on to the day of the rose,
And the winter has taken flight.

There is not a copse, a wood, a grove,
Where the trees stand green and fair,
But the birds are singing of life and love,
And mating and nesting there.
The south winds blow and the household eaves
Are sweet with the fledglings' cry,
And the mother-bird through the bowering
leaves,
Looks up to the soft blue sky.

When the South Wind Blows

There is not a heart so sad and dull
 That it is not glad to-day,
When Nature is holding a cup so full
 Its honey brims over the way —
The weary way, that we often tread ;
 And the path is not hard to go,
When the sun of the spring shines overhead
 And we hear the south wind blow.

BROTHERHOOD

(At a great fire in Paterson, New Jersey, eight churches were destroyed. On the following Lord's Day, the First Presbyterian Church held services in a Jewish Temple.)

Not as once in the court of the Gentiles
By the Hebrew, held sternly aloof,
But, by brotherly kindness invited,
The Christians meet under the roof
Of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
And the aisles of the synagogue ring
To the psalm of the multitude singing
That the crucified, Jesus, is King!

Oh, love that no scorning can tire,
Oh, Fire that purgeth our dross;
Bring thou to this earth its desire,
Bring gain to repay every loss.
We thank Thee that nearer and dearer
Thou drawest in brotherhood's bands,
Men, severed for long by their hatred;
Now clasping in friendship, their hands.

A YELLOW LEAF

All summer's gold,
All autumn's light
In that bright leaf
That lives till night,
Then falls asleep,
And fades away!
Ah, leaf, so brief
Thy splendid stay.
Good-by until
Another day.

LOOMS

Our looms are full of noisy zeal,
God's looms go softly whirring
From start to stop, from dawn to eve,
Without the sound of stirring.

From leaf to sheaf the looms of God
Go singing of His glory ;
And everywhere, in sky and sod,
We read His wondrous story.

A YOUNG GIRL

Through the mist of the years that are finished
and over,
Through the waft of the scent of the blush-red
clover,
Through the ripple of waves that I've heard on
the beach,
Through the lisp of breezes too soft for speech,
I see and I hear her, a vision fair,
That beautiful girl at the head of the stair.

When the roses bloom as they bloomed divinely,
When the shorn wheat lies in the swathe su-
pinely,
When the oriole high in his nest is swinging,
When the hermit thrush in the copse is singing,
I see and I hear her, though none is there —
The girl who sits at the head of the stair.

She was tidy and neat with a dainty trimness ;
She was slender and tall with a lissome slimness ;

A Young Girl

She was golden-haired and her eyes were glinting

With a blue of the heart of the heavens hinting,
And none among maids could at all compare
With the radiant girl at the head of the stair.

Ah, me! for the days that are gone forever;
Ah, me! for the youth that returneth never;
There are girls and girls whom I often meet,
At home, by the way, in the house, on the street,
But never a girl who is half so fair
As the one who sat at the head of the stair.

And the worst of it is, if she still be living
In this land where Time is both taking and
giving,

She has lost some bit of her sweet rose-shading,
For Time is a thief who is always raiding,
And she's far too stout to be sitting there,
As the girl she was, at the head of the stair.

THE GREAT MEN PASS

The great men pass. We stand appalled, and
say,

“How shall we live, when these have left our
day?

How shall we fight when splendid leaders fall,
How work, when silent is their bugle call?”

Ah, friends, the great men pass, but greatness
lives!

Strength for the work, the Master workman
gives.

From heaven’s high wall of jasper true and clear,
Rings out the clarion call; we need not fear.

God’s battles do not cease. Still in the van
The Captain’s banner flies; the Son of Man,
True Son of God, and deathless, leads the way.
To-morrow shall make up for yesterday.

The Great Men Pass

The great men pass, but pass into the light,
Their brave feet climbing up some heavenly
height.

We need not fear, or great, or small, if we
Are workers for the vast eternity.

PAY DAY

Take your pleasure, idle one,
But when falls the set of sun
And the day's long stunt is done,

 Pay-day comes!

If you have the work forgot;
Shirked the duty, left the spot
Of your labor unimproved,
Think not, even the most beloved
Of your friends, or kith, or kin,
Shall find room to shelter in

 Their sweet homes
One who all engrossed with play
Overlooked the stern pay-day.

NOT ALONE

When our dear ones leave us
 One by one,
Never on the strange path
 Do they go alone.

Swift as light from heaven,
 Swift as love,
Comes the Lord to meet them,
 Hasting from above.

Little child, or pilgrim,
 Worn and old,
Do not have to wander
 Looking for the fold.

For the Christ who brought us
 Heaven's grace,
Takes their hand and guides them
 To His dwelling-place.

THE SEAT OF THE SCORNFUL

It wasn't so much the thing you said,
'Twas the way you looked when you said it;
The scornful lip, and the toss of your head,
And your smile ; for a sneer she read it.
You hurt a heart that had need of cheer;
You made a bright day dark,
And — the wing of a dove was drifting near —
You bolted the door of the ark.

There's a wonderful help in a gentle word,
If the truth of love go with it;
It's like the pool by the angel stirred,
If the strength of faith flow with it.
A tone, a glance, a touch of the hand,
The thought of the common bond,
They aid one on through the desert land
To the rest of the home beyond.

WAR AND PEACE

War, and nations clutching madly
In a bout of deadly strife,
Each with furious hate and anger
Menacing the other's life ;
War, and battles in the open ;
War, and grief on land and sea ;
Who shall count the sum of bloodshed,
Who shall gauge its misery ?

Peace, and lo ! the ploughshare driven
Deep into the teeming soil ;
Peace, and lo ! the ships that furrow
Every wave, with fruits of toil ;
Peace, and songs above the cradle ;
Peace, and heaven let down to earth ;
Who shall estimate its blessings,
Who shall gauge its ceaseless worth ?

A FINISHED PAGE

When the last word is written,
And the final word is said;
When the last pang is over,
And you sit beside the dead,
With your heart dumb and smitten,
As you watch by her bed;

You'd give the whole world, then,
For just one chance more;
To say, "Dear, I love you";
To tell her o'er and o'er
That her look was a blessing
When she stood by the door.

That you never meant to hurt her;
That deep down in your soul,
There was truth to her, turning
As the needle to the pole;
That without her, life was empty;
And with her, it was whole.

A Finished Page

But you let the days drift onward,
Till there came the last day;
And she was called to heaven,
And you had here to stay;
And you're wrapped in numb silence;
For there's naught left to say,

Since the final word was written,
And the final word is said,
And you're sitting, dumb and smitten,
Close by your darling's bed,
And your darling lies there sleeping—
Fast asleep: for she is dead.

WHEN HEAVEN RAINS FLOWERS

In these blithe days of summer and sun,
And air is crystal and skies are bright,
And in long white hours our work is done,
And slowly, dreamily falls the night —
In these blithe days, heaven rains down flowers,
Daisies and roses, and all things fair;
And there's never a hidden corner or nook
In the great green country, but flowers are
there.

SHIP AHOY!

Ship ahoy! with rainbow tints and sails out-spread,

Unfearing, eager winds ahead,
With freight of joys and gifts of tears,
O latest ship of all the years,
How shall we greet thee? What hast thou
So gallant and so shining now
For us, who wave the friendly hand
To waft thee to thy far-off strand?

Ship ahoy! The far eternities in thee
Have made investments large and free;
Thou holdest Nineveh and Rome,
And our own country's lowliest home
Safe in thy fold; the waves that break
Before, or slumber in thy wake,
First caught their sheen when God, at flood
Creative, saw, and called them good.
O little ship of mien so fair,
So christened by our yearning prayer,

Ship Ahoy!

What bearest thou to hearts that long
For work or wage, or place or song?

Ship ahoy! To troublous times and stormy
seas,
To wildest gale and softest breeze,
To orchard scents and vesper sighs,
To lilt of birds and April skies,
To battlefields and banners torn,
To many a sombre night and morn,
Thou bearest them who sail with thee;
Shall they escape eternity,
Who on thy deck set foot and glide
With thee, upon the unknown tide?

Ship ahoy! We sail, and drifting, to our ears
Comes music born in distant spheres.
We sail, and lift a fervent psalm:
In tempest safe, and safe in calm.
For lo! thy captain knows the way
Through every path of night and day,
Thy captain, who forever keeps
His word, and never, heedless, sleeps.
The ships pass by, oh! many a ship;
In time's deep currents swift they dip.

Ship Ahoy!

The ships pass by, the shore abides,
Unwrecked by all the restless tides.
One day we'll need the ships no more,
Safe moored on the eternal shore.

Ship ahoy!

COUNSEL

Friend, when your heart is heavy,
And you know not where to turn,
When the years lie dark behind you
And their blistering memories burn,
Arise, and fling them from you —
The thoughts that poison sleep ;
And pray the Lord's good angels
Around you ward to keep.

Nay, dwell not with the sorrow
Of the fruitless might-have-been ;
Nor waste in vain repinings,
The strength the day might win.
Arise, and march straight forward,
And face the years to be,
And pray the Lord of angels
To send you victory.

WHITE LILACS

Beside our Aunt Rebecca's door,
With waft of scent and lift of plume,
When Spring comes dancing back once more,
The dear white lilacs bloom.

They brush the lowly latticed pane,
So honey-sweet they are, and bold,
In sparkling sun and sudden rain,
They keep the grace of old.

But much they marvel where away
Hath passed the tall and stately dame,
Who always knew the lilacs' day,
Who kissed them when they came.

She brought them welcome from the years,
That wrought in her such bourgeoning
Of beauty, that time's last arrears
Were paid her in the spring.

White Lilacs

Beneath the kerchief folded plain
Across her gown of quiet gray,
She kept the girl's heart, glad and fain,
The joyous hope of May.

And though men thought her old and worn,
And angels saw the living truth,
And knew her, child of love and morn,
The lady fair in sooth.

So bloom for her, beside her door,
Dear lilacs that she loved to greet.
Lift snowy plume, and waft before
Her silent house, your sweet.

A RIME OF POETS DEAD

Some one said the other day
The poets all were dead,
We need not hope to wreath the bay
For any living head.

The Muses frightened cannot rest,
Amid our modern stir ;
And fancies rove in bootless quest
Urged on by Money's spur.

“ No atmosphere,” the pessimist,
With mournful murmur cried,
Yet, still the skies are amethyst
At morn and eventide.

And still the little ripples break
In music on the beach ;
The robins at the dawn awake
Sweet songs that need not speech.

A Rime of Poets Dead

Along the yellow shingle, creams
The wonder of the surf;
The hooded violet nods and dreams
Above the velvet turf.

A thousand birds are on the wing;
The nests are woven fair;
And million-fold the branches swing
In blossom-tinted air.

Of song and scent the world is full,
As erst before the sage
To Maiden Science went to school
In this amazing age.

And if the poets, dazed, are crushed
Beneath the awesome weight
Of great inventions that have rushed
Adown the paths of fate,

Dame Nature regnant and serene,
And rich with wealth untold,
Still holds, her royal hands between,
A cup of carven gold.

A Rime of Poets Dead

It overbrims with honeyed wine,
It spills upon the ground,
Its precious sweets are thine and mine
The beauteous world around.

Some morn the poets will arise
And as in Homer's day,
Shall call on wood and wave and skies
To list the words they say.

The things they see, with vision clear,
That thing their lips shall sing ;
Unto some glory of the year
Their splendid chords shall ring.

For Love and Life and Home abide,
And hearts are aye the same ;
And every common highway side
Is rimmed with kindling flame.

Ah, no ! The poets never die !
Bring garlands ; do not list
To any low despairing cry
Of modern pessimist.

A MEMORY

She loved her life, and from it she has gone;
Vanished as softly as a mist at dawn.

She loved her friends; they miss her more and
more:
Death took her suddenly; and locked the door.

She loved her work; 'twas finished when she went
To other work, and higher, well content.

For her dear sake, all work shall henceforth be
More sacred and more beautiful to me.

ONE COAT AND TWO SMALL BOYS

Blue-eyed and freckled-faced, as like as brothers
were the boys,

So starved and thin, one saw at once that few had
been their joys.

They trotted down the street that day, as cold
as cold could be,

But Timmy had an overcoat, and Jack, no coat
had he.

And every little while they stopped, and off came
Timmy's coat,

And Jackie slipped it on, and hugged the gar-
ment to his throat.

Then, warmed a bit, he slipped it off, and Timmy
wore it then,

And thus, like soldiers, on they marched, the
valiant little men.

Oh, city full of millionaires! Oh, nation, pass-
ing proud,

One Coat and Two Small Boys

With wealth that clamors to the skies ! amid the
hurrying crowd
That thronged the path, that bitter day went
poverty and pain,
And did not lift a grieving eye, nor murmur nor
complain.

One overcoat between them ; the brothers bore
the brunt
Of sleet and frost, and trod the street like heroes
at the front.
God grant them yet a better day with plenty in
their hand,
The little loving brothers, now, step-children of
this land !

THE STING OF IT

Now, this is the thing that hurts me
As I look at her vacant chair;
As I hear my heart-beat throbbing
In the empty desolate air;
I could better bear the sorrow,
I could easier stifle the moan,
If when she were here, so often
I had not left her alone.

I knew she was watching for me,
I knew she was waiting there,
And I took her love for granted —
I tell you, it wasn't fair.
Many a time I loitered
When I might have hurried home,
And to-day there is no one to greet me,
To care, if I go or come.

No, she never complained of my coldness;
As proud as a queen was she,

The Sting of It

Always the same sweet woman
And all that a wife could be.
But the little grieved droop at the corners
Of the rosebud mouth I knew ;
And the smile that was wan and fading,
And the pain in the eyes so true.

They told their tell-tale story :
I read it and went away.
Though I meant not half the trouble ;
What good does that do to-day,
When the little hands are folded
And the beautiful face is hid,
And the joy of my life is buried
Under a coffin-lid ?

The doctor said nothing could save her ;
I feel in the dead o' the night,
That I might have saved my Mary
If only I'd loved her right.
A flower is chilled by the frost-blight,
And love can be winter-killed ;
And that is the ceaseless bitter
In memory's cup distilled.

The Sting of It

And this is the sting of remembrance,
As over her grave I bend —
I treated her worse than a foe, when
She was dearer than dearest friend.
And too late I sit in my sorrow
And try to keep back the groan.
There's nothing so mean on the planet
As the meanness that hurts one's own.

FATHER

A little stooped, a trifle gray,
The old man plods the weary road;
Continual work, but little play,
 No shirking of the heavy load.
Just growing old, and bearing care
That few observe, and fewer share.

Years hence perhaps, his boys grown up
 To man's estate, will better know
The bitterness that brimmed the cup
 Of "Father" in the long ago;
So little spoken love was his,
So many joys he seemed to miss.

EMBER-GLOW

The year is almost gone, Love,
The year is almost gone,
Another windy twilight,
Another dark night on,
A dawn, a noon, a midnight,
And then the solemn bell
That strikes the passing of the year
We two have known so well.

Beside the rose-red embers
That fade to ashen gray,
We two shall sit together
And speed the year away.
Another year is coming,
O Love, may it be fair,
And still, may we, hand clasping hand,
Its changeful seasons share.

LITTLE THINGS

Such little things that parted us,
 Not worth the telling over;
Such trifles that were as the breeze
 That bends the blush-red clover;
But oh! a breeze may make a gale,
 A trifle wreck a life,
And little, little, little things
 May waken deadly strife.

THY TASK

A wrong that may be righted,
A pain that may be healed,
A grief that may be lessened,
A ray of truth revealed;
A word in season spoken,
An aid in season given,
This be thy task to do, dear friend,
With faith in God and heaven.

Wherever want and weakness
Amid the gloom abide,
Wherever ill and malice
In craven ambush hide,
There find thy field to battle,
Nor any hardship rue,
For in the strength of heaven
Thy task is there to do.

A CAUTION

Is there something one can do for mother,
When the shoulders bow a little with the load?
Is she not more dear than any other?
Can one somehow help her onward on the
road?

Mother never thinks that she is tired,
Mother never of her toil complains ;
She would say that nothing she desired ;
Seldom does she speak of aches and pains.

Yet 'tis afternoon, and growing dreary ;
All her youth is wanting, and the gray
Of a chilly twilight finds her weary ;
She is old and near the end of day.

Make her stop and take her share of pleasure,
Let *her* have the journey and the rest ;
Give her now and then a little leisure ;
And insist on giving her the best !

A Caution

Second-best will do for Sue and Mary,
With their merry life, a rose in bloom:
Of the mother's joy and hope be chary,
Lest she slip away, and all be gloom.

THANKFUL

“ I ought to be thankful,” she said,
“ I have much to make me so,
But if I were truly thankful,
I wouldn’t be cross, I know.

“ I wouldn’t be horrid and hateful
And fret at the prayers denied:
I would put my foot on anger,
And trample on folly and pride.

“ I’ll try to be thankful, looking
At the bright side, not at the dark,
And perhaps in really trying,
I’ll nearer approach the mark.”

AFTERMATH

Oh, reaped and bare the pasture lay
And shorn the meadows, lately gay ;
But better suns and gentler showers,
And brooding of the loving hours,
Have brought sweet gifts ; the valley hath,
To-day, its fragrant aftermath.

And sweet as emerald is the grass,
Where soft the velvet shadows pass,
And fluttering at its garment's hem,
Are flowers a queen might, leaf and stem,
Wear on her breast ; and brimming o'er,
Is beauty's chalice, filled once more !

ROBIN IN THE TREE-TOP

Robin in the tree-top,
Fluting cheerily,
What's your merry message,
Robin, dear, to me?

Robin bids me waver
Never, come what may;
Robin bids me take the road
As for holiday.

Robin in the tree-top,
Singing all day long,
Thank you, bird of gladness,
For your cheery song.

PRISCILLA

She stepped from the frame of a picture
 Into a dream of mine,
The beautiful maid, Priscilla,
 With her look of auld lang syne.

Never was face more winsome,
 Never was voice more sweet,
Never was maiden fairer
 From her head to her little feet.

I wakened, and lo! beside me
 Was a damsel just as fair,
With eyes like the stars of heaven
 And gold in her waving hair.

Long time ago was Priscilla
 Beloved by old and young;
Her beauty limned by painters,
 Her charms by the poets sung.

Priscilla

But this child of to-day inherits
The grace of the Puritan line,
And the face of the modern maiden
Is the face in that dream of mine.

A CHEERY WORD

Just a cheery word, dear,
 Just a pleasant glance —
And the world grows brighter,
 And the pulses dance.

Cost of loving-kindness,
 Worth its weight in gold,
Is so small that never
 Shall that cost be told.

Meeting on the pavement —
 In the busy throng,
Let your gay “Good morning”
 Leave a lilt of song!

Passing on the corner,
 When the shadows fall,
Drop a genial greeting;
 Smile, if that is all!

A Cheery Word

Fellow rather troubled,
Crushed by hapless luck,
Gathers up his courage,
Faces life with pluck,

All because your cordial
Hail, upon his way,
Told him that the morrow'd
Bring another day !

I WISH YOU JOY

I wish you joy, beloved!
I do not know, my dear,
What path is stretching out before
Your feet in this new year.

But this I'm fain to say;
The transient pang will pass
As ripples on the summer brook,
Or shadows on the grass.

Pain smites and comes to end,
'Tis joy alone abides:
'Tis joy that like the morning light
From heaven exulting glides.

I wish you joy, beloved!
Not gems, nor gold, nor lands!
But only joy, the gift of gifts,
Straight from our Father's hands.

THE DOOR-STEP

Father in his shirt-sleeves with his pipe,
Mother sitting, folded hands, all her dishes
done.

Evening stealing softly on, and in the sky,
Afterglow resplendent; good-by sun.

Down beside the bars, a maiden and a man,
Ruth, and young Leander — neighbor's boy;
Father looks at mother, smiles and nods,
"No doubt that's settled — wish 'em joy."

THE SAME SWEET TALE

Beside the kitchen window
Stands Norah, shy and fair,
And Michael, something flustered,
Is loathe to leave her there.

“ Come out with me my sweetheart,
Come out and see the stars,
Come drive with me, and hear the surf
That breaks across the bars !

“ For it’s oh ! I love you Norah,
Your true love I would be ;
Come leave the close hot kitchen,
Come out of doors with me.

In the filmy curtain’s shadow,
In the stately drawing-room,
Waits dainty Ethel, peerless
As ever a rose in bloom.

The Same Sweet Tale

And Archie suave and gallant,
Bows low before her grace,
And all his heart is written
Upon his honest face.

“ For it’s I that love you, Ethel,
Your true love I would be ;
My car is waiting at the door,
Come forth and ride with me ! ”

ABSENT

A year ago, her hand in mine,
We strolled through forest pathways dim.
We watched the golden eve decline,
We listened to the thrushes' hymn.

But all unseen an angel near
Was waiting, soon to claim his own.
I wander lone and weary here —
She dwells in heaven's radiant zone.

So, drifting fast, these summer days
Bring only memories to me,
And yet the hours are full of praise,
That bird and brook and flower and tree,

Are full of her, who loved them so.
She is not here, but where she stays,
The endless summer blooms, I know ;
And she is in its heart of praise.

Absent

Ah me! the drifting summer days;
To you they bring but love and cheer.
For me are shadowed all their ways,
The one I long for is not here!

LIFE

Life is too brief

Between the budding and the falling leaf,
Between the seed-time and the golden sheaf,
For hate and spite.

We have no time for malice and for greed:
Therefore with love make beautiful the deed;
Fast speeds the night.

Life is too swift

Between the blossom and the white snow's drift,
Between the silence and the lark's uplift,
For bitter words.

In kindness and in gentleness our speech
Must carry messages of hope, and reach
The sweetest chords.

Life is too great

Between the infant's and the man's estate,
Between the clashing of earth's strife and fate,
For petty things.

Life

Lo ! we shall yet who creep with cumbered feet,
Walk glorious over heaven's golden street,
Or soar on wings !

BE BRAVE

Darling, whatever may happen, as you have a
soul to save,
Face the worst like a soldier, ever be true and
brave.
The craven is always worsted ; the craven is sure
to fail,
But the brave heart weathers the tempest and
dares the uttermost gale.

HOPE

Through the winter drear and cold,
Shone the spring with heart of gold.

Tinkling music sweet and clear,
They who had an ear could hear,

Voices of the coming day,
When the brooks should leap and play.

When the leaf and blossom fair
Whispering gladness everywhere,

Birds should flit and blithesome wing,
Herald all the joy of spring.

Though the days be long to wait,
Though the heart be desolate,

Ever through the darkest hour
Thrills the future's radiant flower.

Ever gates of glory ope
At the gentle touch of Hope.

LOVE

When you sum up the year
With its glory of leaves,
Its seed-time and harvest,
Its buds and its sheaves ; —
When you get to December,
You sing the same tune
That 'twas sweet to remember
And carol, in June.

From the day of your youth
To the day of white age,
Through the book of your life
To the very last page,
When comes a great angel
The “ Finis ” to write,
The same true evangel
Is aye your delight.

There be those who will tell you
Of jewels and gold,
Of investments, a story
Of wonder unfold.

Love

One dividend never
Will fail to impart
The self-same wealth ever,
To dower the heart.

Let the spring zephyrs blow,
Or the winter winds howl,
Let fortune smile blandly
Or sullen fate scowl.
From June to December,
What sky arch above,
To life's very last ember,
Life's crowning is LOVE.

JOURNEY'S END

We run the race full merrily,
 Old Time and we together,
And little care have Youth and Love
 For stress of wind and weather ;
The dancing heart they carry weighs
 As light as floating feather.

We run the race full sturdily,
 With Time, when we are older ;
We dare him bravely though we bear
 A burden on the shoulder.
And if he gain upon our pace
 We face him, but the bolder.

We run the race full gallantly
 (The road in need of mending),
When Time, derisive, sees us near
 The Inn of Journey's Ending ;
And swift along the down-hill slopes
 Our pilgrim steps are bending.

Journey's End

We run the race triumphantly,
For Time must break his tether ;
There comes a day we pass beyond
His realm of changeful weather ;
Eternity *must* win, and we
And it, go home together.

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